

WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday, 6th June, 2017 at 2.00 pm** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Yelland
Vice Chairman

Cllr Baldwin
Cllr Kimber
Cllr Roberts

Cllr Evans
Cllr Leech
Cllr Sheldon

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Cann OBE
Cllr Lamb
Cllr Mott
Cllr Sanders

Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Moody
Cllr Parker

Officers:

Steve Mullineaux
Jim Davis

Group Manager Support Services
Specialist - Performance and
Intelligence
Executive Director Head of Paid
Service

Steve Jordan

Anita Ley

Customer Contact Centre Manager

1. **Apologies for Absence**

*O&S 01

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Cheadle, D Cloke, J McInnes, D Moyse; R Musgrave, T G Pearce, P Ridgers and D K A Sellis

2. **Confirmation of Minutes**

*O&S 02

The minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny (External) Committee held on 21 March 2017 and the Overview and Scrutiny (Internal) Committee held on 18 April 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

*O&S 03

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of this meeting, but there were none made.

4. **Items Requiring urgent Attention**

*O&S 04

The Chairman reminded Members that, at the recent Hub Committee meeting held on 16 May 2017, the findings of the Transformation Programme Review Task and Finish Group had been presented (Minute *HC75 refers). One of the recommendations arising from the Hub Committee was that:

“a Working Group of Members to comprise of the Task and Finish Review Group and Cllrs Edmonds and Moody from the Hub Committee consider the conclusions presented and report back in due course”.

As such, a meeting of the new Working Group would be convened in due course.

5. **Committee Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules**

*O&S 05

At the Annual Council meeting held on 23 May 2017, Members were presented with a report on the Council Constitution (Minute CM 8 refers). As a result of the discussion at that meeting, the following recommendation was made:

“the suggested amendments to the Overview and Scrutiny Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules (pages 9 to 20 of the published Summons refer) being referred to the Overview and Scrutiny and Hub Committees for further consideration.”

The Chairman introduced this item and the Head of Paid Service made suggestions to Members on the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee within the organisation. The Chairman asked that if any Members had views on the Terms of Reference, then they should be forwarded to her as Chairman, or to either the Head of Paid Service or

the Senior Specialist Democratic Services. A revised Terms of Reference document would then be produced for presentation to a later meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then the Hub Committee.

6. **Public Forum**

*O&S 06

There were no issues raised during the Public Forum session at this meeting.

7. **Hub Committee Forward Plan**

*O&S 07

The most recent (published May 2017) Hub Committee Forward Plan was presented for consideration. Members were advised that this was a working document and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme could be equally as flexible to ensure there was time to deal with specific issues. The contents of the Plan were then noted.

8. **Quarter 4 Performance Indicators**

*O&S 08

The Lead Member for Performance and Resources presented a report that set out performance levels against targets as at 31 March 2017. He advised there were two areas that were below target during Quarter 4, being '% of calls answered within 20 seconds' and 'average end to end time for Benefits new claims'. 'Residual waste per household' was showing as red on the balanced scorecard but was above target.

The Lead Member went on to say that this was a good time for Members to consider what information should be provided in the scorecard and he suggested that a Task and Finish Group may be beneficial. Members further discussed the target for processing new benefit claims and noted that the target itself was unacceptable. The Group Manager Support Services and Customer First agreed and outlined to Members how the process worked.

However, he also stated that this was an example of how the information being measured in the scorecard was outdated and a Task and Finish Group to look at this would be of benefit, particularly if it were a joint Task and Finish Group with Members from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel at South Hams District Council, to enable reporting to be harmonised. Members of the Committee then agreed and it was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and on being put to the vote declared **CARRIED** that a further recommendation be added convening a joint Task and Finish Group for the proposed performance measure review.

Members went on to discuss other information presented within the report and officers were congratulated on their performance in respect of Disabled Facilities Grants. Members again raised concerns about 'length of time

taken to answer calls'. The Customer Contact Centre Manager responded by advising that call volumes had been particularly high during this Quarter, and accepted that some calls had taken longer than five minutes to answer.

It was then:

RESOLVED that:

1. The Performance levels against target communicated in the Balanced Scorecard and the performance figures supplied in the background and the exception report be noted; and
2. The online dashboards had been reviewed, including the ones for Overview and Scrutiny, Planning and Customer Services Team and feedback on any changes given; and
3. That officers be tasked with developing terms of reference for a Joint Task and Finish group to be convened for the proposed performance measure review.

9. **Overview & Scrutiny: Annual Report**

O&S 09

Members were presented with a report that asked them to recommend to Council the publication of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report. The Chairman asked that thanks be recorded to Councillors Musgrave and Sellis for their hard work over the previous 12 months.

It was then:

RESOLVED that Council be **RECOMMENDED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2016/17 be approved for publication.

10. **Joint Local Plan Update: Standing Agenda Item**

* O&S 10

The Lead Member for Strategic Planning and Housing gave a comprehensive update on progress with the Joint Local Plan. He concentrated on two specific aspects being, firstly, initial feedback on the consultation process and secondly, the weight that could be applied to the Plan.

In terms of the process, he reiterated the timetable and set out the number of responses received. He was able to advise Members of the broad subject of a number of the responses as follows:

1. Some concerns regarding a number of identified sites;
2. Highway Authority concerns regarding issues in Okehampton and Ivybridge;
3. Objections to development proposed in Woolwell;
4. Settlement boundaries; and

5. Challenge from Sutton Harbour Trust on the absence of airport allocation.

He outlined each matter in more detail and stated that the advice of a QC had been sought on these matters.

He then moved on to discuss the weight to be applied to the JLP at the various stages of the process, and consequently the weight to be applied to the existing policies within the Core Strategy and the Local Plan. This was a balance that planning officers undertook on every application. He concluded that West Devon Borough Council was not at much risk and the JLP was gathering weight as the consultation process progressed.

The Chairman thanked the Lead Member for his comprehensive update.

11. **Rural Broadband: Verbal Update**

* O&S 11

Cllr Sheldon updated Members on the position in respect of the rollout of superfast Broadband and the work of Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS). He made the following points:

- Phase 1 of the rollout had been completed by CDS in March 2017 at a cost of £94m;
- Phase 2 should cover the final 5% of the area, which was supposed to be carried out this year, as a cost of £39.5m;
- Phase 2 was split into 6 plots and for the areas including rural West Devon it was not yet decided who the supplier should be;
- Rural areas attracted lower wages. Costs were outlined and concern raised that residents in rural areas would not be able to afford the service;
- Devon County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members were monitoring progress but WDBC Members were on the ground and needed to keep a watching brief on how the rollout was progressing.

Members commented that the fact that local businesses were closing because Broadband speeds were not good enough was a disgrace. In response to a Member asking how they could help, Cllr Sheldon asked that any issues discussed or raised at Parish Council meetings be forwarded to him to enable as full a picture of the Borough wide situation as possible.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Sheldon for his work on this matter.

12. **Task and Finish Group Update:**

*O&S 12

(a) FUTURE APPROACH TO ARTS

Cllr Roberts reminded Members that a Task and Finish Group had been convened to look at Future Approach to Arts following the decision by Council to cut funding to Villages in Action. The Task and Finish Group had met, supported by the Commissioning Manager, who was able to provide background information. The Group had concluded that the Communities Project Fund which was currently underspent, could have a revised Terms of Reference to allow for more Arts related projects to access that funding stream. A report would be presented to a future meeting.

In response to a Member's question, the Executive Director (Strategy & Commissioning) confirmed that discussions around budget setting for the next year would start in September.

13. **Annual Work Programme 2017/18: Initial Thoughts**

*O&S 13

The Chairman introduced the Work Programme for the next 12 months and advised that as the Committee would be meeting more frequently, the JLP would no longer be a standing agenda item but would be presented to the meetings in July and November 2017 and February 2018. Members discussed forthcoming matters that would be presented and the Chairman asked that if any Members wished to add items to the Work Programme then their request should be evidence based. Finally it was confirmed that a report on Planning Enforcement Service Review would be presented to the meeting scheduled for 8 August 2017 and if Members had any specific questions to be addressed in that report to make the authors aware in advance.

The Meeting concluded at 3.55 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
